DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 376 250 UD 030 160

TITLE	Affecting Basic Skills Instruction through the Cognitive Pilot Program of the Broad Based Component: An Implementation Study (1986-87). The New Jersey Urban Initiative.
INSTITUTION	Research for Better Schools, Inc., Philadelphia, Pa.
SPONS AGENCY	New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton.; Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Feb 88
NOTE	60p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; *Basic Skills; *Cognitive Objectives; Elementary School Teachers; *Junior High Schools; Junior High School Students; Pilot Projects; *Program Implementation; State Programs; *Teacher Attitudes; *Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	New Jersey; *Urban Initiative NJ

ABSTRACT

The New Jersey Department of Education asked Research for Better Schools, Inc., to design and conduct a study of the Cognitive Pilot Program of the Broad Based Component of the state's Urban Initiative. The purpose was to provide descriptive information about the implementation of the program in all 21 pilot program sites and of promising practices in 8 sites. The Broad Based Component (BBC) of the Urban Initiative is a state-assistance program designed to help 53 of the state's urban districts address an array of educational issues through multi-year improvement efforts. The primary objective of the school-level Cognitive Pilot Program of the BBC is to help students in grades 7 through 9 who are developing the skills necessary to pass the state's high school proficiency test. The program provides training, materials, and support services for instruction that addresses the skills needed to pass this test. Interviews with 86 teachers and administrators indicated that participants were optimistic and believed in the value of the program and its positive effects. Final outcome data were expected in 1989. Four tables present study findings. Descriptions of selected programs/practices are described in a separate section. An appendix contains the interview form. (SLD)

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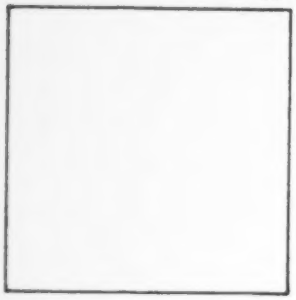

Through the Cognitive Pilot Program of the Broad Based Component: An Implementation Study (1986-87)

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The New Jersey Urban Initiative

Conducted for
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

by
RESEARCH FOR BETTER SCHOOLS, INC.
444 NORTH THIRD STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

February 1988

Research for Bettter Schools, Inc. (RBS) has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education to be the Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory, serving Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Its mission is to collaborate with state, intermediate, and local educational agencies to improve district, school, and classroom practice. To this end, RBS provides a wide range of services that include research, evaluation, information synthesis, planning, materials development, staff development, and technical assistance. Current RBS activities address such topics as: the design of effective remediation programs; programs for students at risk; teacher induction, supervision, and evaluation; evaluation of state programs to improve effectiveness of urban schools; the impact of state testing programs and graduation requirements.

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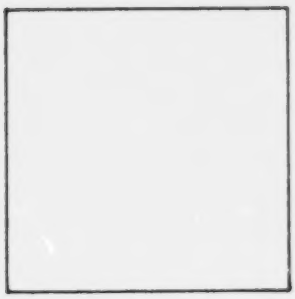
Affecting Basic Skills Instruction



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INMAGIC # 1369

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDE) asked Research for Better Schools to design and conduct a study of the Cognitive Pilot Program of the Broad Based Component of the Urban Initiative. The purpose of this study was to provide descriptive information about the implementation of the program in all 21 cognitive pilot program sites, as well as to provide descriptions of promising programs/practices in eight of the sites. This study will be used as a source of data for the Urban Initiative Interim Evaluation (Year 3).

The Broad Based Component (BBC) of the Urban Initiative is a state assistance program designed to help 53 of the state's urban districts to address an array of educational issues through multi-year improvement efforts. The school-level Cognitive Pilot Program of the BBC is helping 21 districts address the issue areas that are concerned with cognitive outcomes in reading, mathematics, writing, bilingual and compensatory education, and computer-assisted instruction. The primary target of the BBC Cognitive Pilot Program is seventh through ninth grade students who are developing the skills necessary to pass the state's High School Proficiency Test (HSPT).

The Cognitive Pilot Program provides the 21 sites with training, materials and support services that help teachers use a specific set of instructional strategies designed to assist students acquire HSPT-related skills. The support services are made available through a "state facilitator contact person." This person not only conducts on-site training, but also offers services that include: classroom demonstrations, classroom coaching, individual conferences with teachers, curricular assistance, and serving as a member of a school's planning group (the local leadership team). Many of the program sites may receive a small grant of $2,000.

Data about the implementation of the Cognitive Pilot Program were gathered by a team of RBS staff and NJDE consultants in fall of 1987. They interviewed a total of 86 teachers and administrators across the 21 sites. Interviews involved 6-8 program participants in the eight sites identified as having promising programs/practices, and 1-3 people in the remaining 13 sites. Team members used an interview schedule that was developed by RBS and reviewed by NJDE and Regional Curriculum Services Unit (RCSU) evaluators. Participants provided responses to close-ended rating questions and to open-ended questions. The data analysis and the development of the program descriptions were managed by RBS.

Data were analyzed for each site and across all sites. A composite of these data yielded a fairly clear picture of participants' perspective about three program areas: program scope, implementation and impact.

With respect to program scope, participants:

- were optimistic about achieving program goals and objectives by Spring, 1989
- believed they have fully implemented most program activities

- identified as key program elements: (1) the support of school and district level staff, (2) the support services provided by the state (through the state facilitator), (3) the local planning team, and (4) training (state and local levels).

With respect to program implementation, participants:

- reported that the planning process and the assistance provided by the local planning teams (local leadership teams) were effective
- perceived the role of the state facilitator as being very effective, especially through the provision of on-site assistance.

With respect to program impact, participants:

- felt that the program has positively impacted teaching practices
- indicated that the program has positively impacted student performance and attitudes about school and self
- noted that the program has had a positive "ripple down" effect school-wide (beyond those teachers directly involved in the program) in such areas as teacher skills, attitudes, relationships, and curriculum and staff development
- reported that the program has had some impact on the way schools within a district communicate, and on district wide curriculum and training activities.

Participants have engaged in a variety of site-specific programs and practices. Some of the more innovative practices include:

- a newly established high school writing lab
- a middle school creative writing project in which students visit second graders at a nearby elementary school as part of the publication of an anthology of stories
- a computer-based writing program for low ability eighth graders
- the development of a new pool of teachers as trainers for a school and district.

Based upon the results of the study, two broad conclusion can be made about the BBC Cognitive Pilot Program model of state assistance.

Program Value. The participants interviewed in this study highly valued all of the program components. They give high ratings to the training (both regional and school specific), the training materials and the instructional strategies presented in both the training and materials. They especially valued the state facilitator support person, who they unanimously agree, is extremely effective. This person appears to play a critical role in the assistance model, serving as a catalyst for local school improvement efforts, as well as affecting teaching practices through direct school-level support.

Effects on Teaching Practices and Student Performance. Many of the participants are convinced that their school's involvement in the program has made a difference in the way teachers provide instruction and students learn. Teachers are using new instructional strategies and achieving positive results in the classroom. Students are applying their newly acquired skills with increasing confidence and versatility.

Although final outcome data on the BBC cognitive pilot program will not be available until Spring, 1989, this study indicates that participants perceive this program as a promising model of state assistance that will yield valuable outcomes. Furthermore, this model is perceived as yielding other, unanticipated improvement benefits for schools and districts in such areas as curriculum, planning, communications, and staff development efforts.

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INTRODUCTION

Research for Better Schools (RBS) has been assisting New Jersey Department of Education (NJDE) in the evaluation of the Urban Initiative. The Urban Initiative is a comprehensive long term effort to address the problems associated with inner city schools. The Initiative has two component representing two distinct models of state assistance to urban schools: Operation School Renewal (OSR) and the Broad Based Component (BBC). OSR provides large yearly grants (approximately $655,000 to $1.3 million in Year One) to three urban districts in support of school improvement efforts in five areas (e.g., attendance, achievement, disruptive youth, etc.). BBC distributes small grants (approximately $2,000) among several of 53 urban districts in support of school-based programs focused on one or two of nine issue areas (e.g., reading, writing, disruptive behavior, etc.). In addition, BBC sites receive special support services and training opportunities, primarily through the Regional Curriculum Services Units, as well as through other NJDE departments. Some of the BBC sites are part of a Cognitive Pilot Program.

The purpose of this study is to provide descriptive information about the implementation of the Broad Based Component (BBC) Cognitive Pilot Program and to be used as a source of data for the Urban Initiative Interim Evaluation (Year 3). This information, it is hoped, will help New Jersey Department of Education (NJDE) and its urban districts plan and implement future initiatives aimed at improving the effectiveness of education provided in those districts.

NJDE asked Research for Better Schools (RBS) to design and conduct a study that would contribute to the documentation of the implementation of the Cognitive Pilot Program. RBS agreed to undertake this task as one of its state leadership assistance activities, supported by its contract as the mid-Atlantic regional educational laboratory. The study included these steps:

1. RBS designed an interview schedule for BBC cognitive pilot site visits that reflected the interests of NJDE and the Regional Curriculum Services (RCSU) (see appendix for a copy of the interview form).

2. RBS trained seven site visitors (NJDE consultants and RBS staff) to conduct the interviews and prepare draft descriptions of pilot activities. In addition, site visitors attended a workshop conducted by RCSU trainers that introduced them to the Cognitive Pilot Program instructional strategies and materials.

3. NJDE and RCSU staff identified eight BBC cognitive pilot sites that in their view demonstrated promising program/practices for in-depth site visits.

4. In October 1987, two-member teams visited the eight in-depth sites for one day, interviewing six to eight program participants, visiting classrooms where possible, and sitting in on staff discussions.

The remaining thirteen sites were visited by one site team member who spent a half-day visiting the program and interviewing approximately one to three key program leaders. Site team members interviewed a total of 86 teachers and administrators in all 21 sites.

The findings for this study are organized into three parts:

- an overview of the Cognitive Pilot Program as a component of the state's BBC assistance model
- a presentation of descriptive process/implementation data for all 21 cognitive pilot sites
- a description of selected programs/practices of eight cognitive pilot sites.

OVERVIEW OF BBC COGNITIVE PILOT PROGRAM

The Broad Based Component (BBC) of the Urban Initiative is a state assistance program, designed to encourage urban districts to address one or more of nine educational issues through multi-year improvement efforts. Twenty-one of the 53 urban districts are involved in one aspect of the BBC program: the school-based Cognitive Pilot Program. In this program, districts are addressing specific BBC issue areas that have cognitive outcomes: reading, mathematics, writing, bilingual and compensatory education, and computer-assisted instruction. Though the Cognitive Pilot Program seeks to affect the education of both elementary and secondary students, its primary emphasis is on seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students.

Components of the State Assistance Model

There are several ways that the state provides assistance to the cognitive pilot sites. These are described below.

HSPT Training Institutes

These institutes, planned by RCSU staff, focus on one of the three subject areas of the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT) - reading, mathematics, or writing. Each institute presents to teachers and administrators a specific set of instructional strategies designed to assist students learn the necessary skills assessed by the HSPT. The institutes are available to all teachers and administrators in a region; however, cognitive pilot staff receive priority attention during the registration process. The 4-day institutes are presented several times throughout the year, including summer.

Teaching Materials

Teaching materials and booklets have been designed by the NJDE General/Academic Education Division, with assistance from the three RCSUs. These materials describe instructional strategies that teach students skills critical to passing the HSPT, and serve as the curriculum for the HSPT training institutes.

State Facilitator Team (SFT) Contact Person On-Site Training

SFT contact persons are subject area specialists, skilled in working with students, teachers, and administrators. They are staff members of a RCSU and their positions are funded by the Urban Initiative. They not only assist in conducting the initial HSPT training institutes, but they also conduct 2-day HSPT follow-up sessions that are sometimes held to reinforce and enhance institute training. In addition, they plan and conduct other on-site training for pilot staff and administrators, depending upon the needs of the particular site.

SFT Contact Person Support Services

SFT contact persons provide an array of support services to cognitive pilot schools. These services include the following:

- classroom demonstration lessons
- classroom coaching
- informal visits with school and district staff
- conferences with individual teachers
- curricular assistance
- serving as a member of a school's local leadership team.

Services vary in intensity according to specific school and district conditions, needs, and interests.

State Funds

Many of the cognitive pilot sites receive a small grant of approximately $2,000 from NJDE. These funds are used primarily for materials, supplies, and support for training-related activities. Districts cover the training-related costs of teacher release time and substitutes.

Key Processes of the State Assistance Model

The training and support services provided in this state assistance program are coordinated through state facilitator teams (SFT) and local leadership teams (LLT).

State Facilitator Teams (SFT)

The three RCSUs (North, Central and South) are primary state agencies responsible for providing the training and support services to the cognitive pilot sites. They are also responsible for monitoring the pilot sites and collecting evaluation data. The state-level organizational unit that facilitates this process is the SFT. There is a SFT for four of the five issue areas (i.e., reading, mathematics, writing, and computer-assisted instruction). SFT members include the NJDE BBC coordinator, the director of the lead RCSU[1], approximately three to four subject areas specialists (SFT contact persons) from each of the RCSUs, and possibly an RCSU evaluation specialist as well as a General Academic Education staff person (NJDE).

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[1] RCSU provides leadership in four of the issue areas. RCSU South is the reading SFT leader, North provides leadership for both the mathematics and computer-assisted instruction SFT. RCSU Central is the writing SFT leader. The fifth issue area is bilingual and compensatory education; the NJDE Bilingual Education Department serves as the lead agency for bilingual pilot sites.

SFTs meet monthly in order to:

- design a budget
- plan new ways to teach instructional strategies
- share or brainstorm BBC pilot activities and challenges.

A $10,000 budget for each SFT is used for teacher stipends ($50 per day), materials for teams (such as video tapes, cameras and other needed supplies), and expenses related to conferences and school-based training sessions for pilot schools.

Local Leadership Teams (LLT)

At the local level, each pilot site is guided by a local leadership team (LLT). The LLT is composed of teachers and administrators, any one of whom may serve as the LLT chair. This team serves to link the services provided by the SFT contact person with pilot site needs. Most importantly, they provide the following services to the pilot project in their district:

- design the action plan
- facilitate implementation of the plan
- provide leadership and support
- provide training
- monitor program implementation.

PROCESS DATA FOR COGNITIVE PILOT PROGRAM

This section summarizes participant responses in all BBC cognitive pilot sites to questions about program scope, program implementation factors, and program effectiveness and impact. Participant responses are summarized in two ways: (1) responses to open-ended questions are grouped by content, and the frequency of occurrence is noted, and (2) the mean responses to Likert-like questions were calculated for each site and for the total 21 sites. All participants did not answer every question, either due to lack of familiarity with particular aspects of the program or limited interview time. Summary remarks are included at the end.

Program Scope

Program scope refers to the overall objectives, goals, activities, and essential elements that form the unique character of each pilot site's efforts. All of the cognitive pilot site programs are working within the same state assistance model of training, support, and funding. Individual program objectives and activities differ depending on the pilot site's particular issue area (i.e., reading, math, writing, bilingual or compensatory education, and computer-assisted instruction).

Objectives and Overall Goals

Participants in each site were asked to describe their program's objectives. The objectives they offered, in all cases, reflected the specific objectives that the NJDE has established for each issue area.

> Reading and Mathematics (Issue I). To improve the reading and mathematics proficiencies of seventh and eighth grade students in those pilot schools whose staff receive training in instructional improvement models so that 75 percent will pass the reading and mathematics section of the ninth grade HSPT by 1989.
>
> Writing (Issue 2). To improve student performance in writing of seventh and eighth grade students in those pilot schools whose staff receive training in instructional improvement models so that 75 percent will pass the writing section of the HSPT by 1989.
>
> Bilingual and Compensatory Education (Issue 5). To significantly increase the achievement of bilingual pilot students in language proficiency, reading, writing, and mathematics as measured by the district language proficiency test and standardized achievement tests.
>
> Computer (Issue 9). To increase urban students' access to computers by improving the student-computer ratio in urban districts by 20 percent.

However, many participants identified other program objectives to meet their schools' specific needs or interests. Some examples of site-specific objectives follow:

Reading Pilots

- to improve student attitudes towards reading
- to expand the school's ability to provide reading remediation
- to increase parent involvement in helping their child read

Mathematics Pilots

- to align the school's mathematics curriculum with HSPT skills
- to expand district mathematics resources
- to revise and rewrite mathematics curriculum
- to improve articulation between middle and high school mathematics curriculum
- to improve student attitudes towards mathematics

Writing Pilots

- to develop a school-wide staff development program in writing
- to align the school's writing curriculum with HSPT writing skills
- to improve student attitudes towards writing

Bilingual and Compensatory Education Pilots

- to align Limited English Proficiency (LEP) curriculum and with other school curriculum
- to reduce dropout rates of LEP students
- to increase LEP student assimilation
- to increase the involvement of parents of LEP students

Computer Assisted Instruction Pilots

- to develop an expanded software library
- to increase staff usage of computers
- to increase parent involvement and awareness of computers.

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which their school has achieved the Cogntive Pilot Program's objectives on a 5-point scale (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully"). As shown in Table 1, the mean response in 11 of the 21 sites was above 4.00. The overall mean response for the 21 sites was 4.14.

Table 1

Participant Responses About Program Scope

	Mean of Responses Across All Sites	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response Above 4.0	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response 4.0 to 3.1	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response 3.0 and Below
To what extent have objectives been thus far achieved?	4.14	11(52.4%)	8(38.1%)	2(9.5%)
To what extent will BBC goals be achieved by Spring of '89?	4.32[a]	13(65%)	5(25%)	2(10%)
To what extent have program activities been thus far implemented?	4.50	19(90.4%)	1(4.8%)	1(4.8%)

Note. N = 21. Responses on a 5-point scale with 5 = fully achieved/implemented and 1 = not at all achieved/implemented.

[a] 20/21 sites

Participants also were asked to rate the extent to which the pilot site goals will be achieved on a 5-point scale (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully"). As shown in Table 1, the mean response in 13 of 21 sites was above 4.00. The overall mean response for the 20 sites was 4.32. These responses suggest that majority of participants expect the pilot sites to achieve their goals and objectives by Spring 1989 (when final outcome data on student test performance is to be collected).

Activities

All of the cognitive pilot sites are involved in similar training experiences (i.e., HSPT institutes and school-site inservice that extends HSPT learnings). Beyond the training, specific program activities vary according to issue area focus and the particular needs, interests, and abilities of school and administrative staff. Following is a sample of some site-specific activities reported by participants for each of the to issue areas.

Reading

- invited guest authors to speak with students
- sponsored early afternoon parent programs and receptions about reading program
- developed more efficient way to place students in appropriate reading group
- developed a parent reading volunteer program

Mathematics

- introduced notebooks to help students save HSPT-related skill materials for future review purposes
- adopted district model for solving mathematics word problems
- engaged staff in discussion on ways to infuse math HSPT skills throughout the curriculum
- sent letter to parents about HSPT testing

Writing

- adopted Woodbridge Writing Curriculum
- conducted training sessions for parents on writing curriculum

Bilingual and Compensatory Education

- sponsored a series of evening parent meetings
- designed staff inservice sessions focusing on integration of content areas across grades

- conducted workshops on the selection of bilingual texts and materials, followed by teacher selection of new texts

Computer

- conducted parent orientation during open house night
- provided all seventh and eighth grade math teachers with list of available computer software that is aligned to HSPT skills.

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they have implemented pilot site activities over the last year on a 5-point scale (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully"). As shown in Table 1, the mean response in 19 of 21 sites was above 4.00. The overall mean response for the 21 sites was 4.50. These results suggest that participants in the majority of the sites (90 percent) believe that they have fully implemented most program activities.

Essential Elements

Participants were asked to identify program elements essential to effective program functioning ("If you wanted to replicate this pilot project assistance model elsewhere, what would be the minimum basic elements needed to do this? What features of the pilot project would you need to make it work?").

Approximately one third of the participants responded to these two questions. Their responses fell into seven major categories. These are listed below in order of frequency cited. The numbers of responses for each category are noted in the parentheses. They are:

- political and moral support (20)
- services provided by the SFT contact person (18)
- local leadership team (LLT) (15)
- training (14)
- building level flexibility (9)
- teaching staff attitudes (9)
- materials and instructional strategies (6)
- funds (5).

The most frequently cited essential element is "political/moral support." Support came from school and district level administrators, the school board, as well as teaching staff. When describing the nature of this support, they mentioned "their commitment to the program," "their willingness to try new ways of doing things," "their willingness to participate in training experiences." To a lesser degree, participants noted the importance of parent support.

The next most frequently cited essential element was the services provided by the "SFT contact person." This person was perceived by participants as being critical to the program's success. They cited the importance of the on-site assistance, especially in conducting classroom observations, demonstration lessons, videotaping, and personal conferences with teachers.

A closely related and overlapping category of response was "training," especially as it referred to training provided by the SFT contact person. Training included the HSPT institutes and the school-based training conducted by the SFT contact person. The latter is often conducted in conjunction with local staff. Occasionally this training is facilitated by local staff becoming trainers for other local staff members.

The activities of the LLT were often cited as another essential element. In sites where the LLT met regularly and provided key leadership, participants cited both the composition and the function of the LLT as being important. Some noted the importance of having a diverse membership (e.g., teachers from many levels, school and district level administrators). Others observed the importance of the LLT's role in the development of an action plan and the kind of leadership they provided to the program.

Other essential elements cited somewhat less frequently included:

- teaching staff attitudes -- including teacher dedication and commitment to the program, their willingness to try new ideas, and their positive expectations for student performance

- building level flexibility -- school's ability to adjust student and staff schedules, such as block scheduling of students, reducing class size, and finding joint planning times for teams of staff members

- materials and instructional strategies -- specific teaching strategies from the HSPT institutes, and the materials developed by the state to support the teaching of these strategies.

Only a few participants cited the provision of "funds" as an essential element of the program. In such instances, they were primarily referring to funds necessary for teacher release time for training and the provision of substitutes to cover the teachers. These responses were evenly divided among teachers and administrators.

One or two participants cited other essential program elements, including: diagnostic procedures that indicate student progress, ongoing program evaluation, the voluntary nature of the program, and philosophical agreement between the district's content area supervisor and the SFT contact person regarding instructional methods and training strategies.

Program Implementation Factors

This section looks at the following set of factors that relate to the implementation of the BBC Cognitive Pilot Programs:

- the planning process
- the role of the LLT
- the role of the SFT contact person
- the support of the district's central office.

Participants were asked to share their perceptions about each of these factors.

The Planning Process

The product of the planning process in the BBC cognitive pilot sites is the action plan. Action plans were initially designed in the first months of the program (September-January, 1985) by a LLT, and have been revised as necessary. The action plans include: objectives, related activities, timelines and persons responsible for the implementation of activities, needed resources, evaluation plan, and constraints.

The 87 people interviewed from the 21 sites were selected primarily because of their active involvement, in and knowledge about the program in their school/district. This involvement, however, did not guarantee knowledge of the action plan. For example, several teachers who were very involved in the program indicated general awareness of an action plan, but were unsure of its content. Some administrators and teachers indicated that they had become involved in the program only recently and so were unfamiliar with the action plan.

The presence of an action plan and the planning process was not evident in all pilot sites. In some sites, the plan was designed by a central office administrator, and kept on the shelf until needed. Some participants acknowledged that they had not referred to the action plan since its initial writing. In such cases, a central office administrator occasionally used the action plan to keep informed of activities taking place in a pilot site school.

Participants familiar with the action plan largely viewed it as being very helpful. When asked to rate the helpfulness of the plan on a 5-point scale (1 being "not helpful" and 5 being "very helpful"), the mean response in 15 of 21 sites was above 4.00, as seen in Table 2. The overall mean response for the 21 sites was 4.34.

Table 2

Participant Responses About Program Implementation

	Mean of Responses Across All Sites	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response Above 4.0	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response 4.0 to 3.1	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response 3.0 and Below
Planning Process and Action Plan				
To what extent was the action plan helpful? (on a 5-point scale, 1 = not helpful 5 = very helpful)	4.34[a]	15(71.4%)	4(19.1%)	2(9.5%)
To what extent were you involved in planning process? (on a 5-point scale, 1 = not at all 5 = fully)	4.42[b]	15(75%)	2(10%)	3(15%)
LLT Assistance				
Effectiveness of LLT assistance? (on a 5-point scale, 1 = Not at all 5 = Fully)	4.48[c]	14(82%)	1(6%)	2(12%)

[a] 21/21 sites
[b] 20/21 sites
[c] 17/21 sites

Participants cited several different ways in which the action plan was helpful (frequency of response is in parentheses). Their responses can be summarized as follows:

- provided the school with a vehicle with which to periodically revisit and revise objectives, according to current needs (13)
- provided participants with a structure for monitoring objectives and activities (7)
- provided a structure for the planning process (5)
- provided a systematic approach to implementation (4)
- forced school to systematically address a specific problem area (3)
- helped participants retain their program focus (3)
- established measurable objectives that were useful to the evaluation process (3)
- provided the SFT contact person with a way to monitor program implementation and progress (2).

Participants also noted how designing an action plan served to bring them together, and to encourage collaborative and cooperative relationships. In some districts, the action plan for the pilot program became part of the larger district-wide action plan. In these cases, the pilot action plan impacted district-wide policy.

Participants were asked to rate the extent of their involvement in the planning process on a 5-point scale (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully"). As shown in Table 2, the mean response in 15 of 21 sites was above 4.00. The overall mean response for the 21 sites was 4.42. For the large part, participants saw themselves as being involved in the ongoing planning process, if not in the design of the initial action plan.

The Local Leadership Team (LLT)

The purpose of the LLT is to guide the pilot programs through a variety of tasks: planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The membership of the LLTs varied across sites. The chair of the LLT could be a central office subject area supervisor, a building-level administrator (such as a principal or vice principal), department chair, or teacher. Other members could be a combination of teaching and administrative staff.

Participants reported that the LLTs provided a wide range of assistance to the pilot sites. The two areas of assistance most frequently reported were "providing leadership and support" and "planning." Others, less often mentioned, include "facilitating program implementation," "monitoring," and "training." Following is a list of general areas of assistance, in order

of frequency reported (frequency of response is in parentheses), and a brief summary of the specific kinds of assistance provided by LLT in each area to participants.

Leadership and Support (20)

- facilitated communication (vertically and horizontally)
- provided leadership in integrating the program into the district-wide curriculum (e.g., mathematics, writing, etc.)
- ensured the availability of materials
- secured district support for pilot activities
- used its authority to assist in program implementation
- used its authority to facilitate teacher release time
- served as a liaison among various constituents (board, administrators)

Planning (14)

- designed the action plan objectives and related activities
- worked on revisions of the action plan

Facilitating Program Implementation (9)

- provided leadership in seeing that activities were implemented in a timely fashion
- coordinated staff efforts
- provided leadership in obtaining support, materials, and release time for teachers

Monitoring (6)

- kept the program on target
- evaluated the effects and impact of program in progress
- revised the action plan according to monitoring activities

Training (5)

- assisted in the training of staff in instructional strategies
- conducted demonstration lessons.

The kind and extent of leadership provided by the LLTs varied from site to site. In 17 sites where an LLT was evident, participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of their LLTs assistance on a 5-point scale (1 being "not at all and 5 being "fully"). As shown in Table 2, the mean response in 14 of the 17 sites was above 4.00. The overall mean response for the 17 sites was 4.48. These responses indicated a strong belief in the effectiveness of the assistance provided by the LLTs among those responding participants. Participants in 4 of the 21 sites were unable to supply complete data on this question because of the non-functioning status of their LLTs.

Participants also were asked to suggest ways that their LLT could have improved its assistance. Most of the respondents had no suggestions for improvement. The few suggestions offered fell into three categories.

- Leadership and support. In some sites, participants would have liked their LLTs to play more of a leadership or program advocate role in the district.
- Training. Some participants noted that all members of the LLTs should have participated in the HSPT institutes, so that they could have exerted stronger and more knowledgeable leadership and direction.
- Planning. Some participants felt that more planning time was necessary on a more frequent schedule.

The State Facilitator (SFT) Team Contact Person

The SFT contact person provides several kinds of on-site assistance, including:

- classroom coaching
- demonstration lessons
- individual teacher conferences
- curricular assistance
- informal visits to the school
- training workshops
- evaluation.

SFT contact persons provide assistance depending upon their individual skills, and the needs of the pilot site. For example, some videotape a teacher's initial effort with a new instructional strategy, and use the tape for an individual conference with that teacher. Often the SFT contact person plays an important role as a member of the LLT.

Participants were asked to identify the most helpful kinds of assistance provided by the contact person. Participant comments fell into the following major categories (in order of frequency): on-site assistance, the sharing of SFT contact person's skills and knowledge, and their role as a positive external force. In addition, because many participants found it difficult to separate the kinds of assistance provided from the personal qualities of the SFT contact person, a fourth category was added that focuses on the latter. Following is a summary of participant responses for all four categories.

On-site Assistance (25)

- conducting training (workshops, inservice experience)
- providing personal, in class assistance to teachers
- coaching
- providing demonstration lessons
- assisting in planning

Contact Person's Skills and Knowledge (9)

- sharing knowledge of new instructional strategies
- providing numerous hands-on, practical ideas and strategies
- communicating use of new instructional strategies
- providing leadership

Positive External Force (9)

- providing leadership to keep project on target
- serving as a catalyst and facilitator to make good things happen
- serving as a motivator for staff
- serving as a mediator

Personal Qualities (19)

- confidence in their abilities
- ability to instill positive attitudes
- ability to build instant rapport with many different groups (students, teachers, administrators)
- ability to serve as a positive role model to staff

- commitment to make program work
- ability to make self available.

Participants were asked to describe how often their SFT contact person provided them with assistance. Participants reported that the amount of time a SFT contact person spent at a particular site varied, partly due to the varying needs of sites. This perceived variance was also partly due to a participant's own role in a district. For example, a content area supervisor might visit or speak with the SFT contact person more frequently than did a principal, or even a teacher. As shown in Table 3, 5 of 20 sites reported the maximum assistance rate of approximately once a week. Participants in 12 of the 20 sites reported an assistance rate falling between once every two weeks and once a month. Three reported an assistance rate of less than once per month.

Participants were asked to rate how well the assistance provided by the contact person met their expectations on a 5-point scale (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully"). As seen in Table 4, the mean response in 19 of 20 sites was above 4.00. The overall mean response for the 20 sites was 4.76.

Participants also were asked to rate the effectiveness of the role of the SFT contact person on a 5-point scale (1 being "not effective" and 5 being "very effective"). As seen in Table 4, response in 20 sites was above 4.00. The overall mean response for the 20 sites was 4.89.

When asked about ways the role of the SFT contact person could be modified to better meet their needs, participant responses were equally divided between leaving it "as is" and wanting more of this type of assistance. Those who expressed the former opinion were enthusiastic about the assistance they received. Several expressed the opinion that, "If it works, don't fix it." Those who suggested the latter referred to increasing the amount of time spent on site by the contact person in order to perform additional services such as: conferencing, videotaping, demonstrations, etc. Some participants felt that the contact persons had too many responsibilities and so were "spread too thin."

Other role modification suggestions included: providing assistance in identifying strategies to encourage parent involvement and targeting more workshops for administrators and curriculum supervisors.

District Support

The implementation of this program in the various pilot sites required support from a district's central office as well as from a school's administration. This section describes the kinds of support that participants reported receiving from the district office. Their descriptions fell into the following three categories.

Table 3

Frequency of SFT Contact Person Assistance

	Once a Week	Once Every Two Weeks	Once a Month	Fewer Than Once a Month	Not At All
#(%) of Sites	5(25%)	6(30%)	6(30%)	3(15%)	0(0%)

Note. 20/21 sites

Table 4

Participant Response About SFT Contact Person

	Mean of Responses Across All Sites	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response Above 4.0	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response 4.0 to 3.1	# (%) of Sites with Mean Response 3.0 and Below
Extent to which SFT Contact Person assistance met expectations? (on a scale of 1-5, 1 = Not at all, 5 = Fully)	4.76	19(95%)	1(5%)	0(0%)
Effectiveness of the role of SFT Contact Person? (on a scale of 1-5, 1 = not effective 5 = very effective)	4.89	20(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

Note. 20/21 sites

- Leadership and Advocacy. This included moral support, serving on an LLT, trouble shooting problems as they arose, and facilitating and encouraging both teacher and administrator attendance at various workshops. In addition, participants mentioned the importance of making specialized services and other resources available (e.g., test development or computer technology assistance and equipment).

- Financial Support. Participant responses focused on the provision on funds for teacher release time, substitutes, and overtime during the school year and curriculum work and training during the summer.

- Purchasing. In this category participants frequently indicated that "what we needed, we got." This support included securing necessary supplies and equipment, and purchasing new texts and learning materials.

Program Effectiveness and Impact

This section looks at issues related to program effectiveness and impact. The primary focus is on:

- the data collected by the cognitive pilot sites to demonstrate how well their programs are meeting their objectives

- the impact of this program on attitudes, perceptions and behaviors of participants.

Data on Program Effectiveness

The Urban Initiative Office in collaboration with the RCSUs are responsible for collecting data to document the extent to which the pilot sites are achieving their objectives. Participants in this study were asked about other kinds of data they have been collecting independently to provide further evidence of how well their programs are doing.

Eight of the 21 sites (38.10 percent) are not collecting data beyond that required by the Urban Initiative Office. However, among the 13 sites that do collect additional data, they most often reported collecting the following kinds:

- practice pre and post tests of the HSPT

- computer literacy tests

- other basic skills tests (e.g., Math Management Level Test, California Test of Basic Skills)

- parent surveys

- teacher and student attitude surveys

- teacher developed tests

- observations by administrators
- discipline referrals from pilot classrooms.

Overall, these data support the achievement of program goals and objectives.

Program Impact

Participants were asked to reflect upon the impact of this program on several areas: teaching practices, students, the school as a whole, and the district.

Impact on Teaching Practices. Teachers and administrators were able to cite many ways the program had affected teaching practices. Their responses fell into the following two categories (numbers in parentheses indicate frequency of response).

- Instructional Methods (17). Participants cited the increased application of newly introduced instructional strategies related to reading, mathematics and writing skills; the increased use of active participation and hands-on strategies; the increased application of instructional strategies across subject areas; and the increased use of creative approaches to instruction.
- Management of Instruction and Classroom Behavior (8). Participants cited increased time-on-task behavior; improved classroom behavior due to teachers providing increased instructional structure (e.g., start-up activities on the board as students enter the classroom); increased awareness of special needs of students; more frequent testing; and more emphasis on teaching objectives.

Impact on Students. Teachers and administrators were able to cite many ways that the project has made a difference for students. Their responses fell into the following three categories.

- Student Attitude (14). Teachers and administrators felt that students were more serious and motivated in their school work; demonstrated a reduced fear and anxiety about reading; demonstrated an increased pride and confidence in their skills and self-image. They also noted improved student relationships.
- Student Performance and Skill Level (11). Participants cited improved student performance on tests as well as in student ability to apply new skills in all content areas. For example, teachers in one of the bilingual programs noted that their students wrote and spoke better, and also were better able to express their opinions. Some teachers reported a reduction in the number of students failing classes.
- Student Attendance (4). To a lesser degree, participants believed that the program has decreased student absenteeism rates, suspension rates, and dropout rates, especially in the bilingual programs.

Impact on School As A Whole. Participants identified a broad array of ways that the pilot program has made a difference school-wide for teachers not directly involved in the program. These responses can be categorized in the following ways.

- Teachers Skills/Attitudes (26). Participants cited not only an increased awareness of the newly introduced teaching strategies, but a "ripple down effect," in which teachers in lower grades were trying the strategies in their classrooms. Writing pilot participants made special note of how their teaching staff appeared less threatened by the writing process, across all content areas. Participants also noted how teacher morale and confidence appeared to be positively affected by their familiarity and success with new instructional strategies. They noted an improvement in teacher-student relationships and staff morale positively affected by their students' enthusiasm.

- Teacher Relationship (10). Participants noted increased collaborative teacher planning, increased sharing of ideas, and improved communication (especially among bilingual teachers and other staff).

- Curriculum (7). Participants cited greater alignment of curriculum to HSPT skills on a school or district basis, the infusing of writing into all content areas, the revision of curriculum in specific content areas, and the development of new curriculum guides.

- Staff Development (5). According to some participants, the program has altered local staff development efforts. They identified new school-wide staff development programs designed around the teaching strategies, and turnkey training in which teachers knowledgeable about the new instructional strategies conducted in-house workshops for other staff members.

- Organization of the School (4). Some participants reported that their schools have developed teacher schedules that promote collegial planning. Other participants cited reorganized reading groups, school-wide, to reduce the number of reading levels per classroom.

Impact on the District. When participants were asked to describe ways that the pilot programs has made a difference throughout the district, their responses were almost equally divided among the following categories.

- Interschool Communication (6). In this area, participants indicated a new awareness district-wide that the HSPT affects all schools, not just the ninth grade teachers and/or high school teachers. They also noted increased joint planning and cooperative relationships among schools, at all levels.

- Curriculum (5). Participants generally reported that their districts have begun to align curriculum with the HSPT skills.

- Training (5). Some districts have adopted staff development programs that use the HSPT institute instructional strategies as a focal point for training their teachers, K-12.

Summary

An anaylsis of the data in this study yields a fairly clear picture of participants' perspective about the program scope, implementation and impact of the BBC Cognitive Pilot Program.

With respect to program scope, participants:

- were optimistic about achieving program goals and objectives by Spring, 1989

- believed they have fully implemented most program activities

- identified as key program elements: (1) the support of school and district level staff, (2) the support services provided by the state (through the state facilitator), (3) the local planning team, and (4) training (state and local levels).

With respect to program implementation, participants:

- reported that the planning process and the assistance provided by the local planning team (local leadership team) were effective

- perceived the role of the state facilitator as being very effective, especially through the provision of on-site assistance.

With respect to program impact, participants:

- felt that the program has positively impacted teaching practices

- indicated that the program has positively impacted student performance and attitudes about school and self

- noted that the program has had a positive "ripple down" effect school-wide (beyond those teachers directly involved in the program) in such areas as teacher skills, attitudes, relationships, and curriculum and staff development

- reported that the program has had some impact on the way schools within a district communicate, and on district-wide curriculum and training activities.

Two broad conclusions can be drawn about this model of state assistance. These conclusions address the issue of the perceived value of the program, and the perceived effects of the program on teaching practices and student performance.

Program Value. According to interviewed program participants, all components of the program were highly valued. These components include both regional and school-specific training, the training materials and related instructional strategies, the SFT contact person and the range of support services this person provides, the LLT, and the action plan and the planning process. Participants in the majority of sites rated the effectiveness and value of all components to be above 4.00 on a 5-point scale. This was especially true for the role of the SFT contact person.

The SFT contact person appears to play a critical role in the delivery of this assistance model. Through a wide variety of activities, the SFT contact person serves as a catalyst for local school improvement efforts. This person serves as an effective link between the school staff and the district, and in this role facilitates co-ownership for the program. In addition, through the direct, in-class coaching and demonstration of instructional strategies, the SFT contact person is able to directly affect teaching practices.

Effects on Teaching Practices and Student Performance. Participants also reported that the program is positively impacting teacher instructional methods as well as student performance. These impressions are derived from local self-reports, from participants who have looked at some of the initial test results, and who are familiar with what is happening in the classroom. They repeatedly cite the ways that teachers are using the new instructional methods and students are applying these new strategies in dealing with the basic skills of reading, mathematics, and writing.

Although final outcome data on the BBC cognitive pilot program will not be available until Spring, 1989, this study indicates that the program is perceived by participants as a promising model of state assistance that will yield valuable outcomes. Furthermore, this model of state assistance is perceived as yielding other, unanticipated improvement benefits for individual schools and the district in such areas as curriculum, planning communications, and staff development.

DESCRIPTIONS OF SELECTED PROGRAMS/PRACTICES

The following section offers a close-up look at some select programs and practices in eight BBC cognitive pilot sites. These sites provide examples of promising practices, and were selected based upon the recommendation of the three evaluators at the RCSUs and the NJDE Coordinator of the BBC.

Each description provides the following information:

- program overview -- the general characteristics of the program, the school and target population, and any background information that would further illustrate the nature of the program
- program strengths -- participants' perceptions about the unique strengths of their program
- indicators of program effects -- participants' perceptions of the kind of evidence that supports their views about the effect of their program on students and staff
- distinguishing features -- a description of some unique elements of their program, that provides a view of an individual adaption of the state model, or of some promising practices.

ASBURY PARK WRITING PILOT

Program Overview:

The Asbury Park Middle School writing pilot seeks to improve student writing skills by developing staff awareness and capabilities in the teaching of writing, and by developing a writing curriculum that is aligned with the HSPT. Primary administrative and teacher leadership for the program comes from the middle school. Although the pilot's primary target is a core of 180 middle school students who will be in the ninth grade by 1987-88, teachers of students in grades 4-8 have been trained in process writing through the HSPT institutes. In addition, the 2-3 high school English teachers of the up-coming 180 pilot students have attended the institutes and participated in pilot planning activities.

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program has provided the district with the impetus to not only build on the commitment and skills of some of their current teachers, but also to deliberately seek out new hires who excel in the teaching of writing.

- The program has required the district to focus its attention on writing and, as a result, has generated an array of writing-related activities that might not have otherwise occurred.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of the program in their school.

- A large number of students are participating in an array of newly introduced writing activities (e.g., the development of a grade 5-8 writing curriculum, grade 5-8 journal writing, the establishment of a prize winning middle school literacy magazine, the start-up of a middle school student newspaper).

- There is physical evidence of student writing throughout the middle school building. For example, writing assignments are visibly displayed on bulletin boards in most classes, for all subjects, all teachers, regardless of subject area, have writing assignment called "Do Nows" on the blackboards as a start-up activity.

- Students are applying process writing strategies in writing assignment for all subject areas without teacher prompts.

Distinguishing Features:

Seventh graders in Asbury Park Middle School are participating in a unique writing activity that pairs students with second and third graders at the nearby elementary school. The middle school student spends time with one or two of the younger students, getting to know them, their likes and dislikes, hopes, fantasies, and fears. The seventh graders use this information as material for creative writing projects. The product of this effort is the publication of an anthology of stories.

ATLANTIC CITY WRITING PILOT

Program Overview:

Staff from Atlantic City's two junior and one senior highs are involved in all aspects of the writing pilot. All the district's seventh, eighth, and ninth grade language arts and English teachers have been trained in process writing. In addition, seventh and eighth grade compensatory education teachers and grade 9-12 Basic Skills teachers were trained. The pilot program also seeks to influence the teaching of writing by developing a district writing curriculum that is aligned with the HSPT.

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program has generated a new district-wide emphasis in the area of writing that, in the words of one long-time district administrator, "hasn't been seen for 17 years."
- Participants believe that through this program, writing has become an important component of the district's overall improvement efforts. In fact, writing has become so important that it's difficult to separate the pilot program efforts from the district's emphasis on teaching basic skills, including writing. Emphasis on writing can be seen across all content areas.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of the program in their school and district.

- Writing has been selected as the first content area for district development of a K-12 curriculum (effective September 1988).
- Participants believe that staff district-wide are now much more aware that the HSPT is no longer a high school problem, but a concern to be shared by staff throughout all grade levels.

Distinguishing Features:

High school students who have failed the writing portion of the HSPT one or more times are now eligible to receive tutorial assistance at the Writing Lab. In addition, Writing Lab computers and special software provide these students with an opportunity to practice taking various components of the HSPT writing section. The lab director and most of the other staff who work with lab students have been trained in process writing. Teaching staff are assigned to the lab for their duty period.

In 1986-87 the number of voluntary students attending the lab was small enough (approximately 40, with 15 attending regularly) to permit one-on-one personal tutoring in process writing. Students attended the lab on a voluntary basis during study hall. In 1987-88, small groups of 12-15 students attended on a scheduled basis. The lab does not replace their regular English class. Over 100 students are expected to be served in this way.

During 1986-87, all of the fifteen regularly attending lab students passed the HSPT writing component. Other accomplishments of the lab include the publication of a book of student writings.

HOBOKEN READING PILOT

Program Overview:

The Hoboken reading pilot is located in Brandt Elementary School and focuses on the seventh and eighth grade. All teachers from these grades as well as teachers of ninth grade high school English, have attended the HSPT reading institute. All district principals also have attended the institute. Because the seventh and eighth grades at Brandt are self-contained, the emphasis on teaching reading strategies has the potential to be applied to all content areas in these two grades. The district, in fact, selected reading as their pilot program focus because they saw reading as "the cornerstone of the problem, the main key to solving many of the problems related to basic skills acquisition."

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program has helped the school deal with the reality that their seventh and eighth grade teachers were trained for secondary settings, and were unlikely to have training in reading strategies.

- The program has led to considerable interdepartmental sharing among staff. When staff got together previously, they engaged in informal "coffee break" discussions. Today they report spending much more time sharing new ideas and instructional strategies.

- The program has allowed students with reading problems to remain in class for the intervention rather than being pulled out for remediation.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of the program in their school and district.

- Students are applying the reading instructional strategies to all subject areas. For example, students are no longer intimidated by science books because they use pre-reading and reading strategies that allow them to be more successful with the text content.

- A few teachers who feel especially comfortable with the instructional strategies have assumed leadership positions in providing reading inservice for other school and district staff.

- The school and the district have developed an expanded staff development program in reading, that includes a 4-hour reading workshop for all K-8 teachers and principals.

Distinguishing Features:

The Hoboken reading pilot provides a good illustration of a key role played by the SFT contact person - that of assisting select staff not only acquire the new instructional strategies, but also helping these staff members develop a comprehensive school-based staff development program that can

benefit all staff. Following the initial training at the HSPT reading institute, and some follow-up training provided by the SFT contact person, the LLT chair (who in this case was the language arts supervisor for the district), and a teacher worked with the SFT contact person in developing additional school-specific training experiences. Together they planned and implemented workshops that introduced instructional strategies to other staff. This was a new experience for the teacher, who was soon able and eager to conduct similar workshops in the district and throughout the state.

IRVINGTON TOWNSHIP WRITING PILOT

Program Overview:

The primary focus of this writing pilot is on Myrtle Avenue Middle School (grades 7-8) students and staff. All students have been introduced to process writing by the language arts and reading staff who attended the HSPT institute. Staff has been engaged in aligning the writing curriculum with the HSPT, continuous staff development, and designing supportive instructional writing materials (e.g., resource manuals in reading and writing).

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program has encouraged the creation of a problem-solving environment in which the LLT (teachers and administrators) designed a pilot program that altered teacher schedules and work load in order to improve writing instruction.

- The program's emphasis on students writing essays on personal experiences and keeping journals has "opened up the hearts of kids," and provided teachers with good opportunity to become aware of the lives of their students in new ways.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of the program in their school.

- Through district administrative support, Myrtle Avenue School was able to hire an additional "traveling" language arts/reading teacher whose presence permitted increased flexibility in staff scheduling for collaborative planning time, as well as for reduced student-teacher ratios.

- The language arts and reading teachers have become skilled in the process writing approach and new instructional strategies. With these new skills and time for daily collaborative planning, these teachers are becoming a valuable core of professionals who work with the science and social studies teachers in their school to further disseminate these strategies.

Distinguishing Features:

As is typical in many of the cognitive writing pilot sites, Myrtle Avenue School students are asked to keep daily journals. They are encouraged to write freely, for at least five minutes every day. These writings are considered to be personal, and are shared only with their teacher. Sometimes students are asked to write about a specific idea, experience or emotion.

At Myrtle Avenue School, teachers and administrators were greatly moved by what the children were expressing in their journals. Because of these new and often disturbing insights, the school staff recognized the need for increased student guidance and counseling. As a result two new school programs are in place. Myrtle Avenue School and the Irvington Community Mental Health Center have worked out an arrangement in which one of the Center's counselors works at the school one day each week with students referred by staff. In addition, the Irvington Township Board of Education has funded an additional social worker who serves as a liaison between the district and the Irvington Community Mental Health Center.

PERTH AMBOY BILINGUAL PILOT

Program Overview:

The Perth Amboy pilot bilingual program operates at the McGinnis Middle School. The program provides better instruction for students in basic skills; transitioning students from bilingual education into the mainstream as quickly as possible; and providing teachers with new basic skills instructional strategies.

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program has exposed teachers to current teaching styles and strategies.
- The program has provided teachers and administrators with the opportunity to get together, to engage in team building, and to generally communicate about what objectives the school wants to focus upon and achieve.
- The program has provided renewed enthusiasm and motivation among bilingual teachers and administrators, and also has encouraged students to have a more positive outlook on their potential for academic success.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of the program in their school.

- Participants believe that the program is facilitating bilingual student transfer to mainstream English language classes.
- Teachers observe that students have become better writers, and demonstrate increased skills in English and expression their opinions.
- The bilingual curriculum has been aligned to the HSPT and to the school-wide curriculum. In addition, bilingual students were integrated into the academic mainstream as a result of the program. For example, they were invited to a spelling bee.
- The program has given teachers an impetus to review teaching strategies for higher order thinking skills and to utilize alternative ways to reach their goals. There also has been increased sharing and communication among bilingual teachers as a result of their participation in the project.

Distinguishing Features:

One distinguishing feature of the Perth Amboy bilingual program is that it coexistes in the same school with a BBC reading pilot program. It also emphases infusing the use of English and English language instruction strategies in the beginning levels of bilingual instruction. Thus, bilingual teachers are able to emphasize English and English language instruction, when appropriate, to help facilitate the transition of bilingual students into the mainstream of school courses and curriculum.

PERTH AMBOY READING PILOT

Program Overview:

The Perth Amboy reading project is located at the McGinnis Middle School. Primary focus of the project is to train teachers in the essential skills involved in teaching reading and communications, involving parents more in the education of their children, developing students' critical thinking skills, integrating reading across the curriculum, and promoting student motivation toward reading. Staff are involved in training workshops that provide teaching strategies for reading, and in meetings where teachers can share strategies and ideas. In addition, content area and reading teachers work together to promote integration of reading across the curriculum.

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program allows for teachers to observe other classes within the school, and to meet with teachers from other New Jersey districts who share the same content area interest in reading.
- Clearer objectives were established for reading lessons.
- The new instructional strategies have stimulated teachers' interest and motivation in teaching reading.
- Meetings with other content area teachers have promoted the integration of reading throughout the curriculum.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of the program in their school.

- After only two years of the program, there is an increase of approximately 20 percent in students passing the HSPT reading pretest. Other tests have shown similarly positive gains.
- Teachers have observed that students write precisely and exhibit more independent thinking in the classroom.
- Teachers believe that their involvement has helped morale, brought reading and other content area teachers together, stimulated planning and sharing, and linked new teachers with experienced teachers. There also seems to be better teaching, more use of innovative strategies within the classroom and more active student participation in learning activities.

Distinguishing Features:

This school is distinguished in two respects: it has both a reading and a bilingual BBC cognitive pilot project, and the reading project involves the integration of reading across the curriculum as a primary objective. Both reading and content area teachers appreciate the

opportunity to meet and discuss ways in which reading can be infused throughout the curriculum. This opportunity to work and plan cooperatively has promoted teacher enthusiasm for the project. Their enthusiasm was greatly enhanced by the respect and support they received from the school's administrators.

ROSELLE SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPUTER PILOT

Program Overview:

The Roselle program offers student computer-assisted instruction in developing and enhancing writing skills. The program is housed at Abraham Clark High School (grades 8-12), and targets a sample of low ability eighth graders. These students are identified by their performance on spring pre-HSPT writing test results, two years below grade level status on the California Achievement Test, and records of individual performance.

Over the last few years Roselle has established a K-12 computer curriculum, and all teachers have participated in extensive computer-based training. The pilot program provided Roselle with an opportunity to build on this base, while simultaneously addressing the issue of students' writing skills.

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program has encouraged staff to focus attention on the writing skills of low ability eighth graders and develop a comprehensive computer-based program to meet these students needs.
- The program has encouraged staff to that explore an alternative learning modality that emphasizes a hands-on approach for low ability students.
- The program is consistent with the district's commitment to developing a comprehensive computer-based curriculum by providing this select group of low ability students with an additional opportunity to gain computer literacy.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of the program in their school.

- Despite the slow start in getting equipment and facilities ready, and orienting students to the word processing program, HSPT writing scores for these students are rising.
- As a result of the training that the English teachers have received, primarily through the HSPT institutes, teachers have modified their instructional methods in writing, and are able to apply these new methods to the process of teaching writing with computers.

Distinguishing Features:

Roselle's computer pilot program is located in one of the high school's classrooms. This room has been especially wired to accommodate approximately 16 Commodore 64 computers and 3 Epson printers. Class size is small enough to ensure that students can work at their own computer. Approximately

64 eighth graders and 64 ninth graders attend this class as one half of their English class experience for the year. The remainder of the year is structured as a regular English classroom.

The English teachers involved in the program have all participated in the HSPT writing institute and also have been trained in the use of the computer and the word processing program (FLEET). Over the summer break teachers have been encouraged to take the computer home in order to increase their familiarity with the equipment and program.

Once students have gained a familiarity with the keyboard and the word processing program (approximately 4 to 6 weeks), they write on the computers daily, using the process writing strategies (e.g., daily journal writing, and creative writing experiences that include brainstorming ideas, creating drafts, editing and rewriting).

THE VINELAND MATH PILOT

Program Overview:

Vineland initiated a district-wide math program in its four middle schools. The overriding goal of the program is to unify the math curriculum within the Vineland School District, and provide students who transfer within the district a consistent program across schools. Strategies to accomplish this include: developing better teaching strategies for the classroom; increasing parent knowledge of, and appreciation for the importance of the HSPT; coordinating activities and increasing interest in math teaching; aligning the district math curriculum; and promoting a more positive attitude among students toward math.

Program Strengths:

Participants cite the following strengths of the pilot program in their district.

- The program has involved all four middle schools (grades 5-8) in the district, thus building a coordinated and cohesive approach to instruction.
- Because it is district-wide effort, the pilot program has received considerable support from the school district administration, and thus engendered a high level of interest and support among teachers throughout the district.
- Capacity-building and involvement activities for teachers and parents helped to create widespread support and enthusiasm for the program and were felt to contribute to positive attitude changes among students regarding math.

Indicators of Program Effects:

Participants cite the following evidence as to the impact of this program in their district.

- Student outcomes, in terms of math achievement, are very positive. The district collects data on student attitudes about math, Metropolitan Achievement Test scores in math, teacher collected data, student math notebooks, and math pacing charts available for each student. On the 8th grade HSPT pretest, there has been an increase in the passing percentage of 14.6 percent. To those interviewed, students appear to be working harder on math and achieving higher levels of success in math. More students also appear to be on or above grade level in math. Student attitudes about math confirm that they view math more positively.
- Teacher behavior has changed in a positive way. Teachers are using new teaching techniques. District staff formed a cohesive unit that works cooperatively to align curriculum, develop materials, share techinques and ideas, choose unified procedures such as pacing charts, and build problem-solving skills.
- Parents are viewing the school program more positively and understand the importance of their child passing the HSPT. Over 100 parents attended each of the evening meetings discussing the HSPT math test and the math program for the district.

Distinguishing Features:

A distinguishing feature of the Vineland math program is its size and scope. Contrary to the single-school design of most cognitive pilot programs, Vineland insisted on including all four middle schools in the pilot program. This decision to involve all four middle schools paid tremendous dividends in terms of school and community enthusiasm and support for the program.

Moreover, the Vineland math program was distinguished not only by its size but also by its scope. The scope of the program included curriculum development, curriculum alignment, teacher training, parent involvement, and curriculum coordination across the four middle schools. Few programs have attempted to do so much with so little in so short a time.

APPENDIX
Urban Initiative/BBC Site Visit Interview Form

URBAN INITIATIVE/BBC SITE VISIT INTERVIEW

Interviewee _____ Date _____

Position/Grade _____ BBC Issue Area _____

School _____ Interviewer _____

District _____ ID # _____

1. What are the key objectives of your pilot site program?

   How would you judge the extent to which each of the objectives was achieved on a scale of 1-5 (1 being "not at all", and 5 being "fully")?

	Extent achieved? Not at all				Fully
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

2. What are the principal pilot project activities undertaken to accomplish these objectives?

   How would you judge the extent to which each of the activities was implemented on a scale of 1-5 (1 being "not at all", and 5 being "fully")?

	Extent Implemented? (Start up? Completion?) Not at all				Fully
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

3. To what extent were you involved in the planning process for this pilot project? How would you judge your involvement on a scale of 1-5 (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully")?

Not at all
1 2 3 4 Fully
5

Describe:

4. To what extent was the action plan helpful in getting the activities implemented (in planning, in ongoing monitoring, in evaluation)? How would you judge this, on a scale from 1-5 (1 being "not helpful" and 5 being "very helpful")?

Not Helpful
1 2 3 4 Very Helpful
5

Describe:

5. To what extent do you expect your BBC pilot project goal will be achieved by the end of the project (Spring '89)? How would you judge this, on a scale from 1-5 (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully")?

Not at all
1 2 3 4 Fully
5

Explain:

6. If you wanted to replicate this pilot project assistance model elsewhere, what would be the minimum basic elements needed to do this? What features of the pilot project would you need to make it work?

7. In what ways did the Local Leadership Team provide assistance to the pilot assistance to the pilot program?

How would you judge the effectiveness of each type of assistance on a scale of 1-5 (1 being "not at at all", and 5 being "fully"?	Not at all				Fully
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

8. In what ways could the Local Leadership Team have improved its assistance to your school? (What would be your suggestions for improvement)? Explain.

9. What types of assistance were provided by the State Facilitator Team contact person to your district? Did this assistance meet your expectations? How would you judge this, on a scale from 1-5 (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "fully")?

	Types Provided	Expectations Met				
		Not at all 1	2	3	4	Fully 5
Visits	____	____	____	____	____	____
Conferencing	____	____	____	____	____	____
Classroom coaching	____	____	____	____	____	____
Training workshops	____	____	____	____	____	____
Evaluation	____	____	____	____	____	____
Curricular assistance	____	____	____	____	____	____
Demonstration lessons	____	____	____	____	____	____
Other	____	____	____	____	____	____

10. What was the most helpful assistance provided by your contact person from the State Facilitator Team? Explain.

11. How frequently did the State Facilitator Team contact person provide assistance to your district?

-- once/week
-- once every 2 weeks
-- once/month
-- fewer than once per month
-- not at all
-- do not know

12. To what extent was the role the State Facilitator Team contact person effective? How would you judge this, on a scale from 1-5 (1 being "not effective" and 5 being "very effective")?

Not Effective				Very Effective
1	2	3	4	5

Explain:

13. What suggestions can you make concerning how the role of State Facilitator Team contact person could be modified to better meet your school/district needs?

14. Other than the HSPT scores, what evaluation data are you collecting?

15. As a result of this pilot project, what changes have occurred:

In the classroom?

In the school?

In other schools in the district?

On teaching?

16. What kind of support does this pilot project receive from the district (financial?, administrative? other)?

17. How satisfied are you with the BBC pilot project assistance model in general? How would you judge this, on a scale from 1-5 (1 being "not at all" and 5 being "very satisfied")?

Not at all				Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

18. What do you consider to be the major strengths and weaknesses of the overall BBC pilot project?

Strengths

Weaknesses

19. What has been your most positive experience with the BBC pilot project?